



Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ)

## Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program Fact Sheet

### *Purpose*

The purpose of the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement (EJ CPS) Program is for EPA to provide financial assistance to enable affected local community-based organizations to collaborate with other stakeholders (*e.g.*, industry, government, academia, etc.) to develop and implement locally-based solutions that will significantly address local environmental and/or public health issues. To provide a systematic approach towards collaborative problem-solving, OEJ has developed a Collaborative Problem-Solving Model (Model). Such a Model is intended to assist disproportionately affected communities in developing proactive, strategic, and visionary approaches to address their environmental justice issues and achieve community health and sustainability. To be eligible to receive a cooperative agreement under this program, you must be a local community-based organization and must be a non-governmental, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, located in the affected community.

The 2006 Request for Applications period will be open from February 1, 2006 to midnight March 31, 2006.

### *Project Focus*

For the EJ CPS Program, the primary purpose of the project must be to address an existing local environmental and/or public health issue by utilizing the Collaborative Problem-Solving Model.

### *Accomplishments*

In 2003, the Office of Environmental Justice initiated the first solicitation for the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program. This is the second solicitation for applications under the EJ CPS Program. To find out about the latest information on the EJ CPS Program visit:  
<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-cps-grants.html>. This Web site provides a description of the current projects that have been awarded.

### *For More Information*

If you would like more information about the EJ Collaborative Problem-Solving Program, please call the Office of Environmental Justice's 24-hour hotline (1-800-962-6215) or visit the website at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-cps-grants.html>

***To be Eligible to Receive a Cooperative Agreement Under This Program***, you must be an **"affected local community-based organization."** An affected local community-based organization (LCBO) is defined for this cooperative agreement program as an entity/organization that is:

- (1) located in the same area as the environmental and/or public health issue that is described in the application and where the residents of the affected community reside;
- (2) focused primarily on addressing the environmental and/or public health issues of the residents of the affected community;
- (3) comprised primarily of members of the affected community;
- (4) able to demonstrate that it is a non-profit organization through designation by the Internal Revenue Service as a Section 501(c)(3) non-profit organization; and
- (5) at the most basic level of the organizational

hierarchy such as a grassroots group/neighborhood organization that is not affiliated with a larger national, regional, or state organization.

“Affected” is defined as being in the locale which is influenced or altered by the environmental and/or public health issue.

**Individuals; universities; state, local, and tribal governments; water districts or similar entities; water districts or similar entities; large non-governmental organizations such as national environmental groups; environmental justice networks; churches; watershed protection organizations; or organizations that are not located in the affected communities where the projects are located are not eligible to receive Federal funds under this cooperative agreement program. The organization’s primarily purpose MUST be to assist the community in addressing local environmental and/or public health issues.**

## **EPA's Commitment to Environmental Justice**

On November 4, 2005, EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson issued a memorandum reaffirming EPA's commitment to environmental justice for all people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income. This means not only protecting human health and the environment for everyone, but also ensure that all people are treated fairly and are given the opportunity to participate meaningfully in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

In recognizing that minority and/or low-income communities frequently may be exposed disproportionately to environmental harms and risks, EPA works to protect these and other burdened communities from adverse human health and environmental effects of its programs, consistent with existing environmental and civil rights laws, and their implementing regulations, as well as Executive Order 12898 ("Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," Feb. 11, 1994).

The memorandum also identifies 8 national environmental justice priorities and directs the integration of environmental justice into EPA's planning and budgeting processes, including the Agency's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2006-2011. These national priorities include: reducing asthma attacks; reducing exposure to air toxics; increasing compliance of regulations; reducing incidence of elevated blood lead levels; ensuring that fish and shellfish are safe to eat; ensuring that water is safe to drink; revitalization of Brownfields and contaminated sites; and using collaborative problem-solving to address environmental and/or public health concerns.

EPA will continue to fully implement its programs, policies, and activities to ensure that they do not adversely affect populations with critical environmental and public health issues, including minority and low-income communities.